DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 076 924 CG 008 146

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TITLE The Years of Anxiety: A Handbook for Parents of Junior High School Children.
INSTITUTION Oconomowoc Public Schools, Wis.
PUB DATE 71
NOTE 19p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Human Development; Individual Development; *Junior High Schools; *Junior High School Students; Manuals; Parent Attitudes; Parent Reaction; *Parents; *Parent Student Relationship; *Student Adjustment; Student Needs; Student Problems; Students

ABSTRACT

This handbook was written to assist parents in developing greater understanding of early adolescence and the function of the junior high school in relation to their child. It assumes that during the transitional stage from pre-adolescence to adolescence young people need a special situation in a particular setting to provide for their specific needs. The handbook points out the importance of the junior high school as an educational level attainable by virtually all students which is designed to allow broad exploration into academic, vocational, and avocational areas and to acquaint students with the vast educational possibilities available. Prepared by the junior high school guidance department, the handbook examines the operational structure of the school, the general curriculum, pupil personnel services available, extra-co-curricular activities, report cards, homework, close parent-student-school communication, and conferences with teachers and counselors. (Author/SES)

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# A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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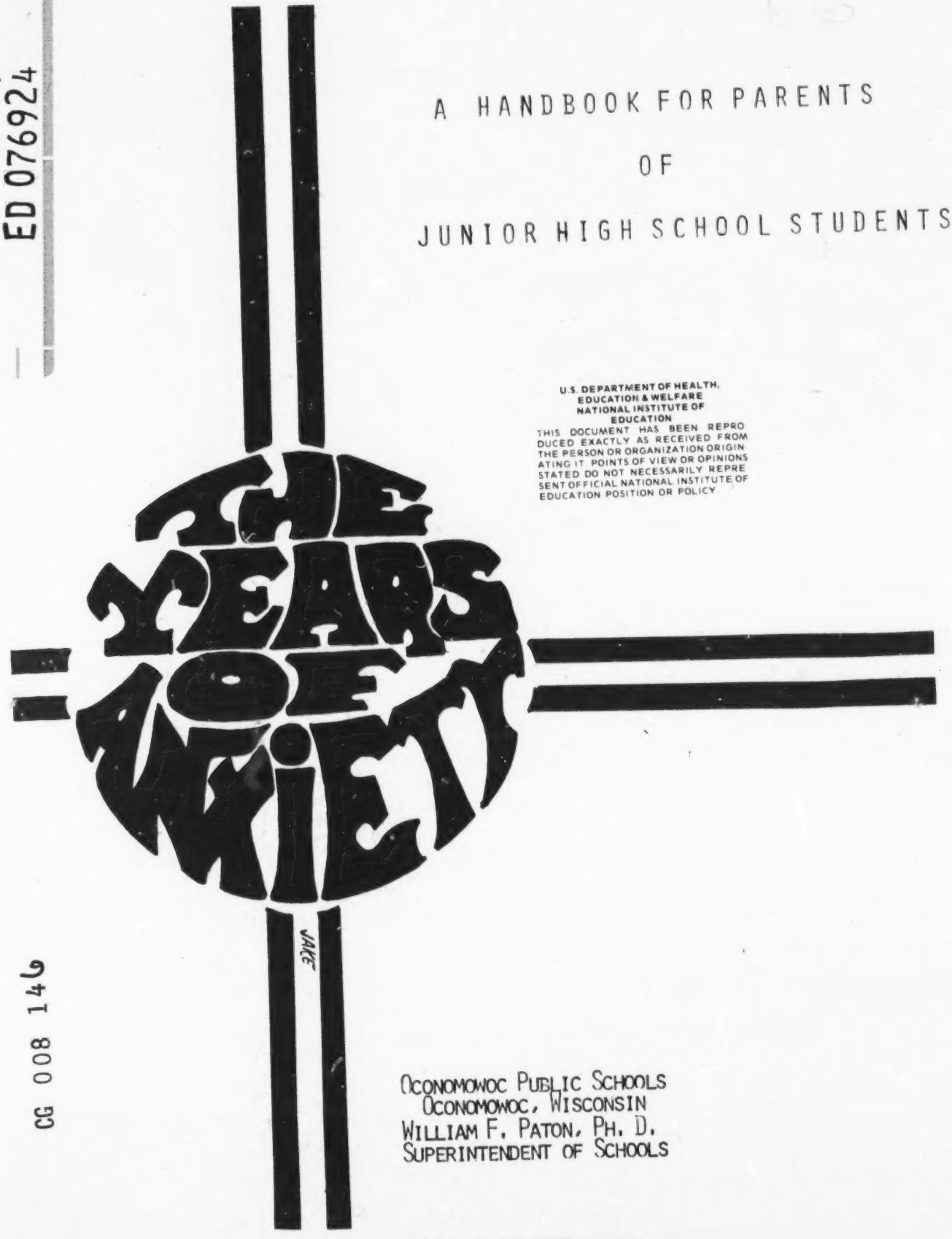


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Oconomowoc Public Schools
Oconomowoc, Wisconsin
William F. Paton, Ph. D.
Superintendent of Schools

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# THE YEARS OF ANXIETY

## A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS
## OF
## JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN

Prepared by the Junior High School
Guidance Department

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## ON CHILDREN

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you

And though they are with you they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts.

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

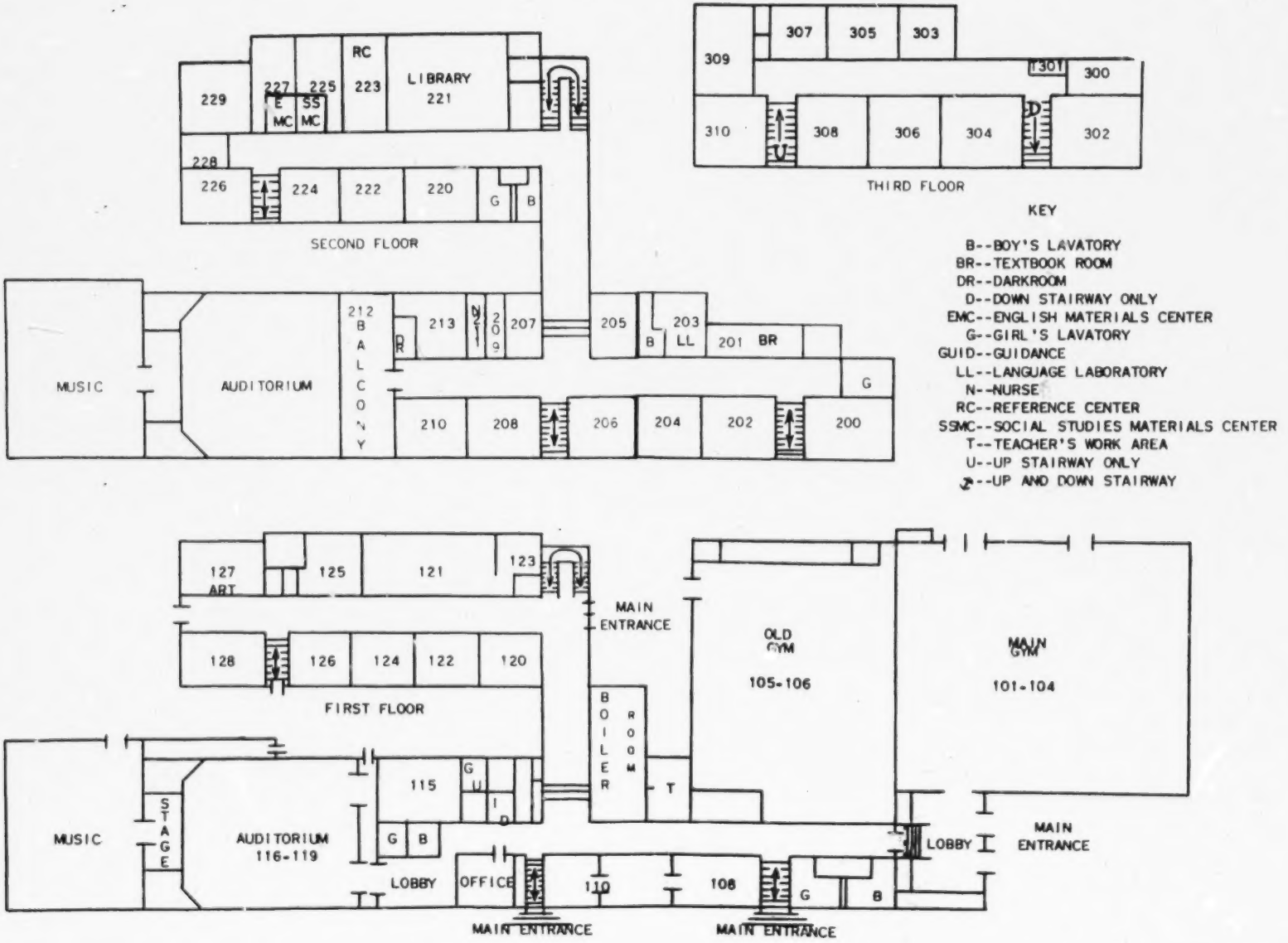
You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

–Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet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## INTRODUCTION

The junior high school concept of school organization is distinctly an American contribution to the education process in a democratic society. Its existence is based on the belief that this particular age span is a fairly definite stage in the natural growth and development of boys and girls. During this transitional stage from pre-adolescence to adolescence, it was felt that these young people need a special situation in a particular setting to provide for their specific needs. Thus, the educational program of the junior high school is specifically directed toward assisting in the natural growth and development of these children.

Unlike the European educational systems of the past, the American educational program has been geared to the total development of all students regardless of what their background has been. The junior high school plays an important part in that it provides an educational level attainable by virtually all students. These students are then in a better position to see what further education has to offer them. The junior high school has been referred to by some as the "bridge of encouragement".

The varied program of the junior high school is designed to allow broad exploration into academic, vocational, and avocational areas and to acquaint students with the vast educational possibilities available. The program is constructed to incorporate the fact that different individuals have different needs. It attempts systematically to assist each child in understanding himself and his relationship to others and develop those skills necessary to achieve these understandings. The program is one that is still evolving as better ways and means are found to meet these goals.

To summarize the role of the junior high school we can say that its function is to provide for the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of students who are in a stage of rapid and irregular growth and development. It is a transitory school designed to meet the requirements of a specific stage in human development.

It is hoped that this handbook will assist parents in developing greater understanding of early adolescence and the function of the junior high school in relation to their child.

## DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL

## JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (Title III) E.S.E.A.

As a result of a 1967 evaluation of our junior high school by the State Department of Public Instruction, we were asked if we would be interested in applying for a grant from Title III of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act for the purpose of developing a model junior high school. An initial planning grant under this act was applied for and obtained in 1968 for the school year 1969 – 1970. A pilot porgram was conducted and a formal pro - posal for a three-year operational grant was developed during this planning phase. The three - year operational grant was submitted and approved for initiation in school year 1970 – 1971.

The purpose of this three year program is to develop a school that is based on the needs of children.

What this school will be like, no one can say at this time. One thing that we are certain of is that it will be different than what we have had in the past. It will demand changes in operational structure, curriculum, and staff development. It will not be static in its existence; rather, it will be dynamic to meet changing needs and conditions. Its ultimate success will be, in large part, dependent upon your support in terms of offering constructive criticism and advice. It is a tremendous opportunity for all of us to help our children. The community cooperation and assistance we have received in the past has brought us to our present stage of development. Your continued efforts will certainly bring us to that point when we can say that Oconomowoc truly has a "model junior high school."

## * OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

## OCONOMOWOC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

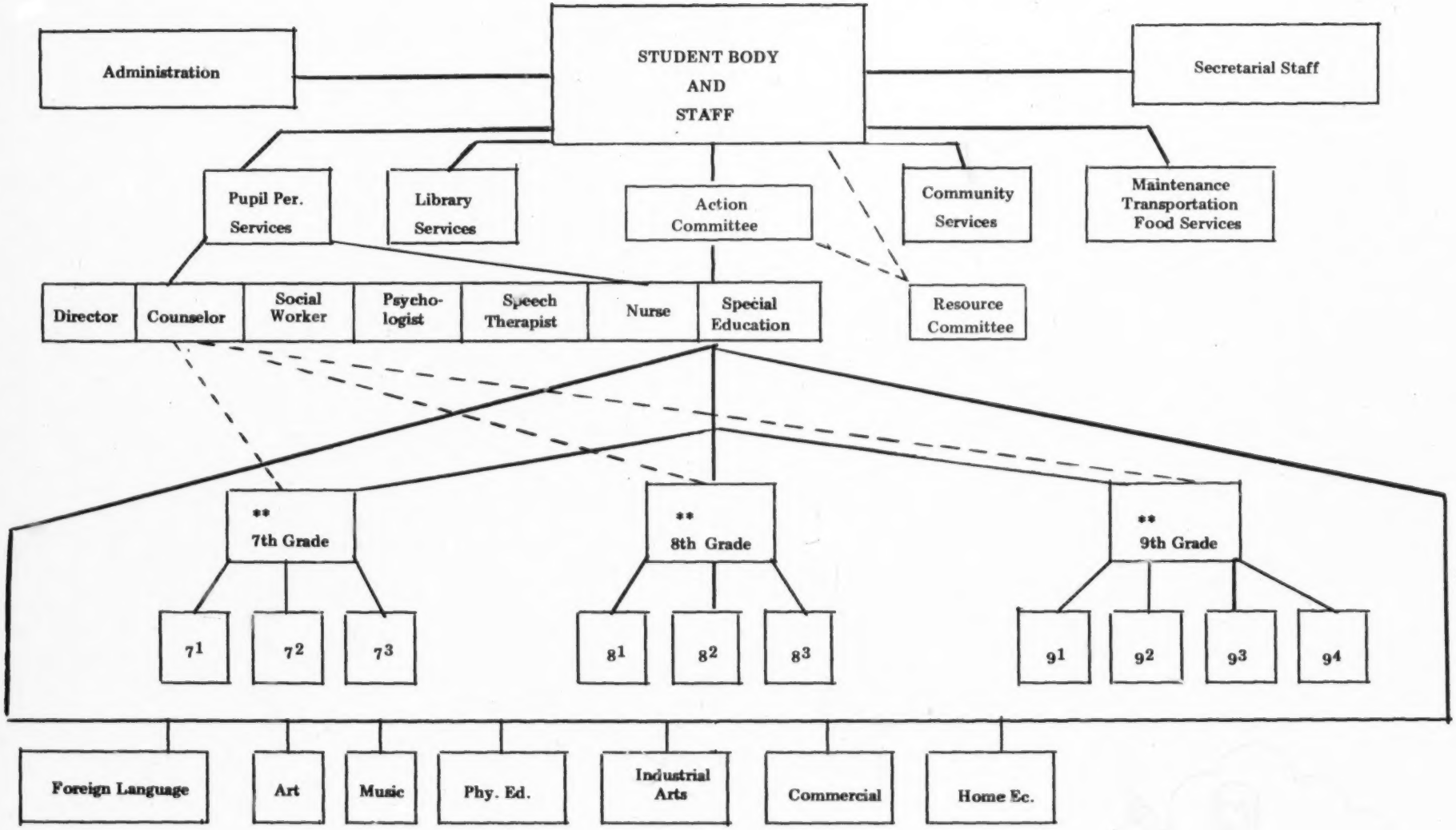
Many of us look back fondly at the old "one room" school house. We think of the close personal relationships; the cooperation between students of different grade levels and the teacher; the individual attention that each of us received; and the loyalties that we developed toward one another. We think of these days in contrast to the "bigness" that confronts our children today and it becomes a little frightening and frustrating. At the same time we realistically recognize that many of the opportunities provided for our children could never have existed in the "one room school." Our junior high school has attempted the difficult task of merging the major benefits of the small school and the large school. Following is a description of the school's operational structure:

Our school operates on a "school within a school" principle. That is, the school as a whole is divided into ten smaller schools or sections as they will be referred to in this paper. Each section has four teachers (English, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics) with one of these four teachers assigned as team leader. The section has a student body of 120 to 145 students from one grade level assigned to it for instructional purposes. The students are assigned to the section for one half of the school day without specific time designations assigned to any given subject area. The other half of the day is devoted to special subject areas (Industrial Arts, Home Ec., Art, Foreign Language, etc.), study halls and lunch. Section teachers have two common work periods per day for the purposes of planning and coordinating their teaching, working with individual students, meeting with parents, interrelating their subject areas, and meeting with counselors to discuss individual student learning problems.

The advantages of this structure are fairly obvious. With four academic teachers all having the same students, they have a greater opportunity to get to know their students individually. They can do this because they have the chance to discuss their students among themselves, with parents, and with other teachers and specialists within the school and school system. The students are exposed to fewer students and as a result should have fewer problems of adjustment and find it easier to make friends. Parents can have greater awareness of what their child is doing in school because they can contact the section teachers as a whole rather than seeking out four individual teachers. Because of the time flexibility, teachers will be able to show a movie or present some other program once to a large group of students rather than five times to small groups of students. Academic grouping of students will take place only within each section, thus it will allow for changes to take place whenever the teachers or student feels it is necessary. A student will not be placed in a basic or low class and have no opportunity to move ahead at an accelerated rate. Likewise, students who are moving ahead rapidly and suddenly run into difficulty will have a better chance of slowing down to a pace that is more reasonable.

It should be noted that there are three things that may present some problems with our operational structure. One, students will be moving into a new kind of situation and may find it difficult to overcome preconceived ideas that they have about junior high school. Two, teachers will need time to develop new concepts of teaching and the use of time. Three, and perhaps most important, our school building, because it is old and overcrowded, may prevent teachers from doing many of the things they would like to do for their students. One additional problem we have at present is, because of overcrowding, it is necessary to schedule certain classes (this varies with need) at the high school. The advantages of this structure are such, however, that we are confident in time it will provide our children greater and more meaningful educational experiences.

* It should be pointed out that changing conditions could force dramatic change in this operational structure.




* Composed of representatives of all departments, sections, administration, students, and lay-staff.

** Each grade section consists of English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

## THE GENERAL CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the junior high school is intentionally broad in scope. As previously pointed out, one of the functions of a junior high school is to provide exploratory experience for students to make them more aware of the vast opportunities available to them. This does not mean that other levels of education do not provide exploratory experiences, but rather, that this is a crucial phase in their development and their first real exposure to specialization of subject matter. Perhaps more important, for some of the students this is their last experience with formal education.

The curriculum is extremely flexible and constantly open to change as new experiences teach us better and more practical ways of meeting the needs of the individual student and society.

The curriculum is comprehensive–that is, it is for all students regardless of what their future aspirations may be.

The content of the curriculum is explained in some detail in the Curriculum Handbook for Oconomowoc Secondary Schools. Copies of this handbook may be obtained through the Junior High Guidance Office. (567-7211, Junior High Guidance extension.)

## PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES

The area of Pupil Personnel Services includes all those services performed on the behalf of students that fall outside of, but are directly related to, instructional services.

### Special Education

Special provision is made for those students of appropriate age who are mentally retarded to receive education in the junior high school. A specially trained teacher works with small groups of students for the purpose of instruction at a level they can comprehend. These students are also included in classes other than English, Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics with other members of the student body when it is deemed appropriate by the special education teacher. Students who are severely retarded are provided for elsewhere in the school system. Further information on this program can be obtained through the Oconomowoc School System Learning Center. (567-6963)

### Psychological Services

Our junior high school presently employs three counselors to work with students individually. A counselor is assigned to each of the three grades. A counselor is assigned to a seventh grade class and wherever possible, remains its counselor until the class has moved through junior high school. In this way the counselor has greater opportunity to get to know his counselees individually and, conversely, they have more time to develop trust and confidence in him.

Counseling is available to all students. Its purpose is to help the student interpret and relate facts about himself and his world and to apply this knowledge in a) solving everyday problems and b) making realistic educational and occupational plans. Counselors attempt to see all students, however, because of the large number of students that each counselor works with, the primary responsibility for seeing a counselor rests with the student.

A school social worker is shared between the junior and senior high schools. His function is much the same as that of the counselors except he works with fewer students and on a more intensive basis. He does not attempt to work with all students as the counselors do. He is trained to work with both students and parents in resolving problems. His job is such that he is provided time to go into the home to meet and work with parents as well as students.

The school system also employs a school psychologist whose major task is to administer and interpret psychological tests on an individual basis. Whenever a question arises as to a student's abilities or to his capacity to perform in a given class, referral is made to the school psychologist. He then determines which individual tests might be utilized to provide information leading to the resolution of a particular problem. Based on test results, the psychologist then makes specific recommendations to teachers, counselors, and parents as to how a problem might be best resolved.

Efforts are made to coordinate school services with non-school services–welfare, health, mental health, and other private and public agencies.

**Speech Therapy**

A speech therapist works at the junior high school part-time to assist those students who have exhibited speech difficulties. She works with these students on an individual basis or in small groups.

**School Nurse**

The school system does not employ a school nurse but works cooperatively with Waukesha County in this area. The county nurse assists the junior high in establishing various health programs necessary for the children's welfare. Eye tests and hearing tests are periodically administered to all students (except in those cases where there are religious exemptions). The nurse works jointly with the Red Cross in maintaining the school health room where students may go when they feel ill. Volunteer workers are in charge of the health room and contact parents or doctors when the need arises based upon information given by the parents during registration. The county nurse also maintains communications with health agencies in Jefferson and Dodge counties.

**Standardized Testing**

Periodically, standardized achievement tests are administered to all students. The tests are designed to measure a student's performance in terms of skills and/or subject areas. The purposes for giving the tests include a) to give students and parents an opportunity to see how they perform in comparison with other students in the state and nation, b) to assist teachers in individualizing their instruction, c) to help identify areas of strength and weakness in the curriculum, and d) to help individual students develop realistic self concept in terms of their achievement, aptitudes and interests.

In addition to the achievement tests, we periodically administer tests of mental maturity. Presently, these tests are administered in the ninth grade. The purpose of these tests is to give teachers, counselors, students, and parents an estimate of what an individual student can reasonably be expected to perform. These test scores are then related to achievement test scores and grades to determine a student's actual program.

Other measurement devices are used selectively to measure interests, attitudes, and non-verbal abilities when it is determined to be appropriate and necessary.

It is not the policy of the junior high school to communicate standardized test information to parents and students on mass basis, since the results could be easily misinterpreted and misunderstood. Both students and parents, however, may receive individualized interpretations of these test results through the student's counselor at any time.

## NOON HOUR LUNCH PROGRAM

Because our school draws students from an area of 125 square miles and approximately 60 percent of our students are bussed in, we operate a closed campus. That is, all students are expected to remain in school all day unless they bring a special written request from their parents to leave school during the noon hour. Since feeding almost 1,300 students involves a considerable amount of time and space, we have provided two full periods during the middle of the day when one of our gymnasiums is converted to a lunch room. Exactly when a child eats during this two period time block is determined by classes into which he has been scheduled since half of the students must be in class when the other half is eating.

One area of tables is set aside for use by those students who wish to bring their own lunch from home. Provision is made for these students to purchase milk for their lunch.

Students who wish to eat hot lunch may choose to purchase the regular menu meal that changes daily or they may choose to go into the "hamburger line." The reason for the so-called "hamburger line" is that we recognize that on any given day there are a number of students who dislike the regular menu enough that they would choose to go without eating. For this reason we feel a secondary menu is essential if all students are to eat. Our experience has told us that a hungry child is less likely to learn than one whose hunger is satisfied.

When a student has completed his lunch he is free to relax, converse with friends, study, or participate in a limited number of activities.

Prices for lunch tickets vary from year to year. These prices will be published in the local newspaper prior to the beginning of each school year.

## SNOW DAY INFORMATION

In the event of excessive snow, it is sometimes necessary to close the Oconomowoc Public Schools, or, in some cases, alter bus procedures for a given day. All such information is relayed to Milwaukee radio stations for broadcast at the earliest possible time. Other area stations also carry this information, however, their broadcasting time originates too late, in some cases, to be useful to you in determining whether or not school will be in session.

## EXTRA–CURRICULAR AND CO--CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

During early adolescence the process of achieving independence is emphasized for most children, whether they are prepared for it or not. This involves, of course, ignoring the well intentioned advice of adults many times; and occasionally, this drive for independence leads to out-right defiance of adult authority. While this situation is rather unpleasant and sometimes painful for both the children and adults involved, this growing desire to achieve independence and self-responsibility is normal and inescapable.

Recognizing that the drive for independence itself cannot nor should not be halted, the problem then becomes one of providing sufficient opportunities for the child to make decisions in a semi-controlled environment. The extra and co-curricular activities in the junior high school play an important role in this process. By allowing children to have their own organizations (clubs, teams, etc.) and parties within the school situation, we provide for a gradual growth in responsibility rather than an abrupt independence. It becomes apparent, then, why the school attempts to have such a wide range of activities available–to insure that all students have an opportunity for limited independence and responsibility.

The school's activities program is not limited to promoting growth in student responsibility. It also considered by the staff to be a supplement to the standard school curriculum, relating to specific school work whenever feasible. Some activities allow the students to make use of the skills and knowledge the have obtained in the regular classroom.

Some of the activities available to the students are: inter-scholastic football and basketball, bowling, photography, school newspaper, school fine arts magazine, forensics, yearbook,dramatics, student council, science club, cheerleading, library club, and the National Junior Honor Society.

As expanded facilities and additional personnel are available, this program will continue to grow and develop to meet the ever increasing needs of the individual students.

## REPORT CARDS AND MID–QUARTER PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards are sent directly to parents at the end of each nine week period. An explanation of the grading system is included with the report card. Whenever appropriate, teachers may include individualized comment cards evaluating your child's progress beyond traditional letter grades.

In addition to report cards that are sent out routinely, provision is made during the middle of each quarter for teachers to sent mid-quarter progress reports to parents of selected students. The purpose of these reports is to inform students and parents of various weaknesses and strengths that have evidenced themselves thus far during that particular grading period. It gives students an opportunity to correct their weakness and capitalize on their strengths prior to the final recorded grade of that quarter.

If you have any questions at any time concerning a particular grade, you may contact the specific teacher by calling 567-7211, Junior High extension.

## HOMEWORK

The word "homework" might in itself be confusing. We would like to make this word flexible enough to include all work done outside of class, assigned or unassigned, that pertains to work in class; thus the work does not necessarily have to be done at "home." A study hall, a bus, a car, a backyard, an empty lot, a store, or a public library may be the setting for homework.

We believe there might be a tendency to limit a class period from bell to bell. We would like to have class work carry over from one class to another, from class to home, ideally from class to all situations met daily.

Homework is given for the following purposes:

1. **Completion of class work.**

   There are occasions when the daily class assignment cannot be completed during the allotted class time. It is also frequently necessary to have the student use reference material not available in the classroom.

2. **Enrichment work.**

   In most instances the more ambitious, conscientious, and capable students are encouraged to do more than the normal outside work. Use of good books,current newspapers and magazines are some methods highly encouraged. This also provides opportunity for creativity.

3. **Individual study.**

   While teaching and learning are interdependent and are primarily carried on in the classroom, we feel that most students need to develop the responsibility for individual study habits. This can be accomplished by self-discipline.

The homework that is assigned by teacher can be put into four catagories:

1. Written homework - such as writing out answers to questions or working out problems.
2. Study homework - such as reviewing or memorizing important facts, principles, formulas, or definitions.

3. Reading homework - such as reading of material in books, magazines, or newspapers related to class work.

4. Activity homework - participation in any activities of a nature that will supplement class work–such as interviewing, observing, making collections, etc.

Often too much emphasis is placed, both by teacher, parents, and pupil on written homework. This is the most typical type of homework because it is definite evidence that work is being done outside of class and it is the easiest to enforce, but it still does not insure learning. "Study homework", if done conscientiously obviously is the most desirable and should be emphasized. Study and reading homework also provide for greater flexibility in planning, organizing and utilization of time and the development of study habits needed in further education. (This does not mean, however, that written work should be overlooked.)

Parents can do their part to improve homework by:

1. Providing their children with suitable study conditions. It is important to note that children differ greatly in terms of how they function most efficiently. Remember that to some children silence and isolation can be more distracting than "noise" from a radio or phonograph. A child need not be set aside at a desk in a room by himself with the door closed. While it is true that this may be ideal for some students, it can not be considered as a general rule for good study habits. Many children are more comfortable and efficient when there are other people around and there is music playing in the background. Let your child establish some of his study conditions making sure that you observe carefully to help him establish the necessary controls. Be prepared to offer advice and assistance when it is needed and desired.

2. Encouraging their children but avoiding undue pressure. Remember that your child must feel he is working for himself and his own improvement. Too often children grow up feeling that their school work is really performed for the benefit of their teachers and parents. Obviously this attitude does not encourage sincere efforts on the part of the student.

3. Being interested in what their children are doing but not doing their work for them. A child's study habits, will in many ways, reflect a parent's attitude toward school.

4. Recognizing that interest spans vary, and study habits must fit the individual. Do not insist upon extended periods of study. Several brief sessions frequently are more effective.

To assist you in developing study habits appropriate for your child, both teachers and counselors are available to help you examine your child's particular strengths and weaknesses and to make recommendations based on them.

## CLOSE PARENT–STUDENT–SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

"I can't understand him! He's not at all like the other children were."

"He's so clumsy; he's always tripping over something or knocking something down."

"Mary is very lazy–she just doesn't like to work."

"Her grades were always very good, but all she does now is spend her time talking on the phone."

"I just don't know what's wrong with him!"

"My parents don't understand me."

"All my friends have more freedom than I do!"

"None of my teachers like me."

The preceding statements are typical of comments heard by teachers and counselors every year in conferences with students and parents. They express disappointment, concern, confusion and misunderstanding.

The early period of adolescence is usually regarded as the most trying and difficult period parents and children have to experience. It is difficult because children during this age period seem to be quite unpredictable both in behavior and growth patterns. The one thing that is predictable about boys and girls in this age bracket is that they are diverse and unpredictable individually. This knowledge in itself, however, is helpful in that adults can prepare themselves to accept the normality of these changes and differences among children.

Specifically some of the characteristics of early adolescents are as follows:

A. Physical

1. Rapid increase in height.
2. Rapid increase in weight.
3. Disproportionate growth of legs, arms, hands and feet.
4. Uneven growth of bones and muscles.
5. Changes in the body contour.
6. Marked changes in facial proportions; lack of facial symmetry.
7. Striking individual differences in physical development within the normal range.
8. Rapid and uneven growth of digestive organs.
9. Rapid growth of heart and arteries.
10. Increased activity of gonadol sex hormones, balanced by gradual decrease and final cessation of growth hormones.
11. Beginning of menstruation in girls.
12. Maturing of the reproductive organs.
13. Changes in skin, hair and cutaneous (oil producing) glands.
14. Increased excretion of sweat glands.
15. Increase in manual strength.

B. Social and Emotional

1. Elaborate resistance to, yet need for, parent and home control.
2. Intolerance of younger brothers and sisters.
3. Desire for privacy.
4. Selection of model (hero) outside of the home and family.
5. Exaggerated desire for conformity to standards of the peer group.
6. Frequently self-centered in their demands in use of family possessions (radio, TV, bathroom, telephone, etc.)
7. Changing patterns of social acceptability. Examples: gradually decreasing boisterousness and restless activity; increasing attention to personal appearance; girls generally become more aggressive.
8. Growing interest in the opposite sex.
9. Group membership (clubs, teams, gang, etc.) become increasingly more important.
10. Desire to find meeting places removed from too close supervision by adults.
11. Wide swings of the pendulum between childish and adult behavior.
12. A tendancy toward exaggerated emotional response.
13. A tendancy to daydream, to be disorganized in work, to be easily distracted.
14. They begin to challenge the ethical and moral precepts by which parents have guided them in younger years.

15. Many begin a heightening of religious feeling.
16. Expansion of interests.

It is generally known and accepted that this particular stage of development is the most difficult adjustment period the children have to experience. For some, the difficulty is so slight as to go unnoticed, in others, the problems can become rather serious. It is extremely important, therefore, that both parents and school keep in close contact to determine when difficulties arise and what is best done about them. From the school's standpoint, we are concerned primarily about interferences with the child's learning. We cannot be concerned about this without being concerned with everything related to the child's normal social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth.

Parents traditionally expect the school to contact them in the event their child is having any difficulties. In the elementary school this is normally the procedure since the teacher usually knows his students quite well and is quick to recognize when things are not as they should be. This teacher usually has about 25 to 30 students. When the child reaches the junior high school, the parent expects this same type of communication to take place. While our teachers try to maintain this communication; it is not always possible. Two factors change the situation considerably: 1) the teacher can have 130 students or more instead of 30. 2) the teacher does not have enough intimate knowledge of the individual student to know whether or not his behavior or attitudes have changed. As a result the parent has to take a more active role in school-parent communication. The parent is in a much better position to know if things are changing, if the child is unhappy, etc. Too often the parents sit back assuming nothing is wrong at school because "If there was...the school would call me." Many times "the school" is unaware of existing problems because they have not had enough time to get to know the student. It is especially important, therefore, in the early weeks and months of junior high school that the parent be alert to adjustment problems arising in school. A phone call to his teacher or counselor may save him a lot of discomfort and anxiety later on.

It is important to note that it is not desirable for the parents to appear over anxious or worried about their child. As it has been previously mentioned, this is a normal stage of development. Most difficulties can be resolved rather quickly, real problems usually occur when there is a lack of sympathy and understanding of what the child is experiencing.

## CONFERENCES WITH TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS

Conferences with teachers and counselors can be held anytime during the school year. These conferences can be initiated by the parents, student, teachers, counselor, or the administration. Any time there is a concern about a student's performance, behavior or well-being there is sufficient cause for a conference to be arranged. The conference can be arranged with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with any number of school staff members who work with your child directly or indirectly. It is possible, and desirable, to arrange these conferences during the school day.

Too often parents are reluctant to communicate with the school because they do not wish to impose upon the teacher's time. We want to emphasize that our school considers this communication vital to our total program. Our effectiveness as a school is greatly enhanced by cooperative and concerned parents. We encourage you to arrange a conference whenever you feel there is a need.

Individual conferences can be arranged by calling the junior high school office – 567-7211, Junior High extension and asking to speak to the specific teacher with whom you want the conference. If the teacher is not available at that time, the office will have the teacher contact you when he is able to do so.

If you desire a group conference with any number of staff members, you may contact your child's counselor–567-7211, Junior High Guidance extension or his section leader–567-7211, Junior High Administration extension.

If you lack transportation or are unable to come to school because of your hours of employment, it may be desirable to have a telephone conversation with the staff with whom you wish to speak. It is also

possible to have a telephone conference with a number of staff members if you wish. The conference phone is located in the Guidance Office and you may arrange a phone conference by contacting the Junior High Guidance Office explaining the staff members with whom you wish to speak. A time will then be arranged for you to call when these staff members will be present. Phone conferences can normally be held within 24 hours from the intitial contact.

## SUGGESTED DO'S AND DON'TS FOR PARENTS

### DON'TS

1. Don't compare your child with your own past – your world was considerably different. Most of todays adults were raised in a society that had a much greater rural influence, where the family unit was much closer and had greater interdependence among its members. Our children have much greater awareness of what is going on in the world and society today because of better and more consistent communication primarily due to television. Because of the affluent society we have created, our children have been largely freed from worrying about financial security. As a result, they are less self-centered in terms of seeking security. They can look beyond themselves and be concerned about poverty, hunger, injustice, bigotry, and war as it affects others to a greater extent than we were able to.
2. Don't compare one child with another (yours or someone elses) – no two children are or should be completely alike. All individuals differ in abilities and cannot be expected to perform at the same level of competence as others at different things. A democratic society must place considerable value on the uniqueness of the individual. This uniqueness allows our society to benefit from the many different strengths people possess.
3. Don't try to impose your ambitions on your child – his desires might be different from yours; his abilities might be different. The temptation for a parent to force his child into succeeding at goals where he has failed is very strong. It is unhealthy for a parent to try and live his life through his child. The child must have his own life otherwise he is likely to become a frustrated and unhappy adult.
4. Don't make fun of his values, goals and immediate objectives – to the child these things are very serious. The early adolescent is particularly sensitive to what he considers unwarranted criticism. If your child expresses unusual or what you regard to be foolish ideas, remember that their ideas change frequently so it is best not to be overly concerned and overly critical since this may simply reinforce ideas and attitudes that you truly object to. While the seriousness of a situation may seem distorted and exaggerated to you, you must try to examine the situation from your child's frame of reference.
5. Don't forget that the older child continues to desire affection and response – if these are not given freely, the child may do something that demands the attention he craves. Quite often the mistake is made of thinking that when a child reaches his teens he no longer craves affection. This is no more truthful about teenagers that it is about adults. Affection and love are human needs not limited to small children. This is a particularly sensitive issue where there are small children and young adolescents in the same family. The older children frequently fear they are being replaced. This fear may seem illogical but nonetheless can be very real unless care is taken not to neglect the emotional needs of the older child. (Please note "On Loving A Child" on the last page.)
6. Don't overlook the fact that to him–school is work! School is your child's job and, just as you can be exhausted after a hard day's work, so can he. What makes it even more difficult for the child is that he has less to say about his job than you have about yours. While it may be true that his vacation is longer, keep in mind that most parents don't get homework. It is also true that his rewards are less immediate and less tangible than yours (the payroll check.)

## DO'S

1. Be aware that he is rapidly changing – physically and emotionally. Be careful not to be too critical if he becomes clumsy, or his eating and sleeping habits vary a great deal. Try to provide an adequate diet but don't be too surprised if he doesn't appreciate it. Try to make sure that he has regular physical and dental exams. Be prepared for childish and emotional behavior at times. Teenagers love melodrama and often tend to over react, sometimes because they really are upset and sometimes to simply use it as a tool to get their way. Try to be able to tell the difference. Make sure you read and keep in mind the list of characteristics listed earlier in this booklet.

2. Be consistent in your discipline. Parents often have conflicts over discipline of children. Whenever a child senses conflict between his mother and father over disciplinary procedures he will capitalize on it. Remember that teenagers are particularly skilled on this, avoid being overly harsh by inflicting unreasonable punishment. Also keep in mind that discipline and punishment do not mean the same thing. Discipline simply defined means "control" and this does not necessarily have to involve punishment. Try to avoid over-reacting to a situation one time and the next time pretending you don't care what happens.

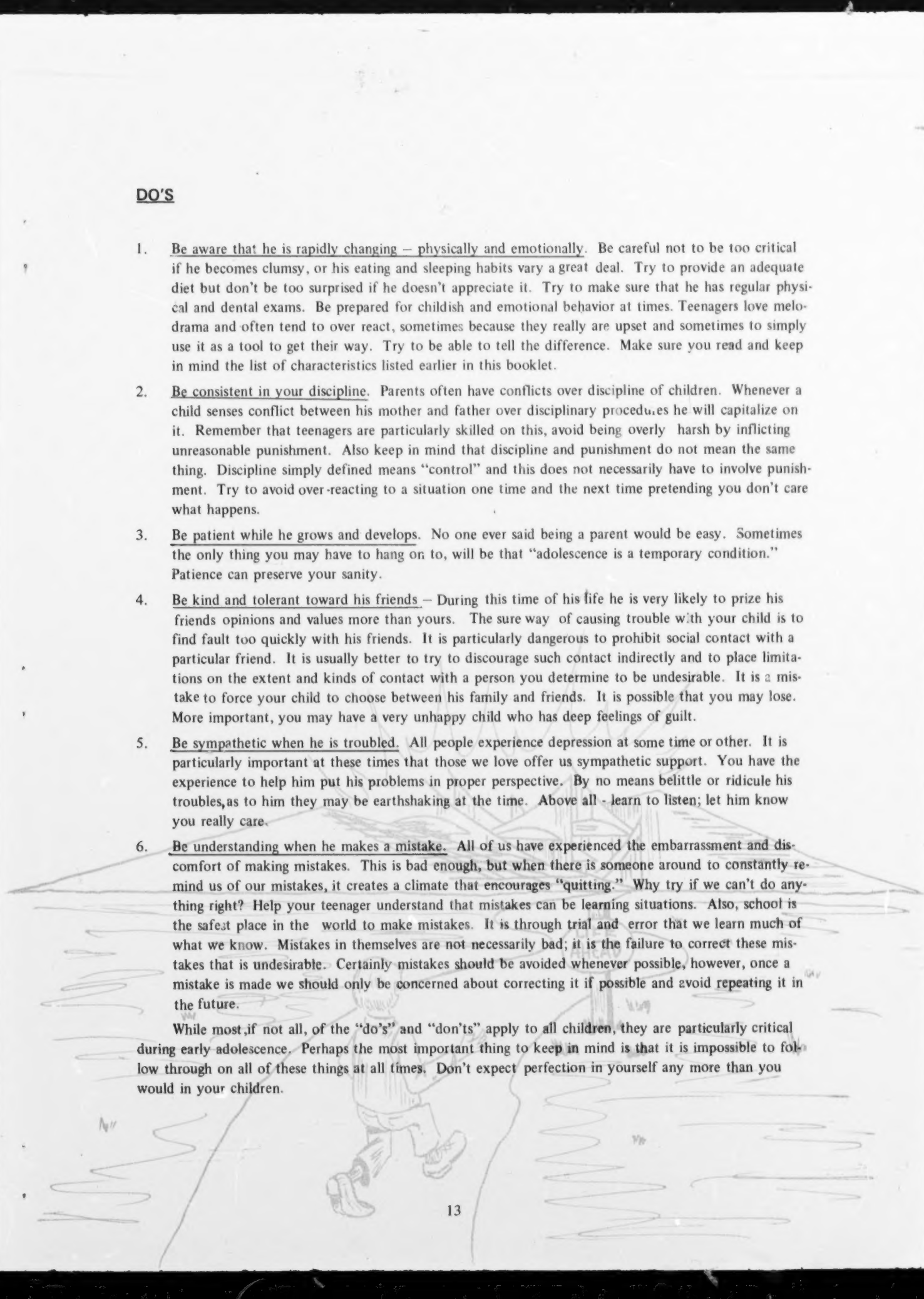
3. Be patient while he grows and develops. No one ever said being a parent would be easy. Sometimes the only thing you may have to hang on to, will be that "adolescence is a temporary condition." Patience can preserve your sanity.

4. Be kind and tolerant toward his friends – During this time of his life he is very likely to prize his friends opinions and values more than yours. The sure way of causing trouble with your child is to find fault too quickly with his friends. It is particularly dangerous to prohibit social contact with a particular friend. It is usually better to try to discourage such contact indirectly and to place limitations on the extent and kinds of contact with a person you determine to be undesirable. It is a mistake to force your child to choose between his family and friends. It is possible that you may lose. More important, you may have a very unhappy child who has deep feelings of guilt.

5. Be sympathetic when he is troubled. All people experience depression at some time or other. It is particularly important at these times that those we love offer us sympathetic support. You have the experience to help him put his problems in proper perspective. By no means belittle or ridicule his troubles, as to him they may be earthshaking at the time. Above all - learn to listen; let him know you really care.

6. Be understanding when he makes a mistake. All of us have experienced the embarrassment and discomfort of making mistakes. This is bad enough, but when there is someone around to constantly remind us of our mistakes, it creates a climate that encourages "quitting." Why try if we can't do anything right? Help your teenager understand that mistakes can be learning situations. Also, school is the safest place in the world to make mistakes. It is through trial and error that we learn much of what we know. Mistakes in themselves are not necessarily bad; it is the failure to correct these mistakes that is undesirable. Certainly mistakes should be avoided whenever possible, however, once a mistake is made we should only be concerned about correcting it if possible and avoid repeating it in the future.

While most, if not all, of the "do's" and "don'ts" apply to all children, they are particularly critical during early adolescence. Perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind is that it is impossible to follow through on all of these things at all times. Don't expect perfection in yourself any more than you would in your children.



## ON LOVING A CHILD

Love can be a number of things. It can be a kiss, a hug, or a friendly pat. It can be a smile at the right time or a few words of encouragement. It can be a helping hand or sympathetic understanding when a child is troubled. It can be all of these things and many more but most of all, it can be someone who will listen–someone who listens without always making judgments or finding fault; someone who will advise but not lecture; someone who will tolerate mistakes and help correct them without saying "when I was your age . . .," and someone who remembers that it sometimes hurts to grow up.

–David L. Smith